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THE

# ADVENTURES

NIGHT.

A FARCE

IN TWO ACTS,

As it is performed at the  
THEATRE ROYAL,

DRURY-LANE.



MAY 20, 1784.  
From Taylor's Collection.

Printed for T. EVANS, near YORK-BUILDINGS, STRAND,  
MDCCLXXXIII.

THE  
SECRET EYE

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

LONDON

MEN.

MORECRAFT, *a trading justice*, Mr. PARSONS,  
HASTINGS, *Fairlove's friend*, Mr. PALMER,  
DIAPER, *a rich old citizen*, Mr. BADDELY,  
SPRIGHTLY, *an university student*, Mr. BANNISTER, jun.  
FAIRLOVE, *an officer*, Mr. BARRYMORE.  
CRAB, *the constable*, Mr. WRIGHTEN,  
CAPIAS, *Morecraft's clerk*, Mr. BURTON.

WOMEN.

Mrs. MORECRAFT, Mrs. HOPKINS,  
HARRIET, *Diaper's daughter*, Miss PHILLIPS,  
LUCY, *Harriet's maid*, Miss COLLET.

SCENE, LONDON.

PRINTED FOR J. DODS, 1812.

M U D O A N S

**P R O L O G U E,**

By the AUTHOR of the FARCE.

**L**OOK where we will, this spacious city round,  
Adventures, and adventurers abound.  
Observe the courtly, levee-hunting tribe,  
All boasting conscience, all above a bribe,  
Professing all with interested zeal,  
They have no object but their country's weal;  
Ask you the cause which prompts so much grimace?  
This wants to get, and that to keep his place.

Advent'ring quacks in law, and physic, long  
Have been the fruitful theme of many a song;  
But still unaw'd, they plunder as they please,  
And laugh at censure,—while they count their fees:  
Alike the patient's, and the client's fate,  
One takes your life, the other your estate.

Advent'ring brokers, trusting they shall cheat,  
With more security by such deceit,  
In advertisements tell the tricks of trade,  
And shew the game themselves have often play'd;  
In this, at least, they merit our belief,  
There's nothing like a thief to catch a thief.

The stock adventurer, still more bold than those,  
Can make events, and change them at his ease;

This

## P R O L O G U E.

v

This hour affirming, and the next denying,  
He beats even Brussels' fam'd Gazette in lying:  
What tempts him thus through thick and thin to swear?  
Why he's a bull, when he shou'd be a bear.

The spendthrift peer, by adverse fortune cross'd,  
Who has at Arthur's every shilling lost,  
Some wealthy city heiress tries to meet,  
And pays his humble court in Watling-street;  
Old Square-toes longs to live among the great,  
Miss sighs for title, equipage, and state;  
The match is made, she plays th' adventurer's part,  
And shines a Duchess, with an aching heart.

Are there then none, of all this numerous band,  
None, who may justly our applause demand?  
Yes, Britain's heroes, who by sea and land,  
Adventure nobly for their country's good,  
And bravely shed at her command their blood;  
Shall see that country idolize their name,  
And crown their valour with immortal fame;  
While round their temples honour binds a wreath,  
Whose leaves shall triumph over time and death.

But sure, of all th' adventurers of the age,  
Those are the boldest who attempt the stage;  
For tho' elsewhere they thrive, and are respected,  
Pretenders here are sure to be detected:  
Conscious of this, our bard with anxious fear  
At your tribunal ventures to appear;  
To whose decision he submits his cause,  
And waits th' impartial verdict of its laws.

T H E

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Y O U T H

THE  
ADVENTURES of a NIGHT.

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A C T I. — S C E N E I.

*A Chamber in Diaper's House.*

*Harriet, and Lucy, discovered with Diaper.*

D I A P E R.

R E T I R E to your chamber, Harriet, I'm going to the club, and have no time to attend you now; besides, if you had as much eloquence as both houses of parliament, I shou'd be tir'd of hearing you always upon one subject, and I wonder you are not tir'd of talking upon it.

L U C Y.

Lord, Sir, how can you expect a young lady shou'd be tir'd of talking of her lover? especially when talking of him is the only consolation you allow her.

D I A P E R.

And the only one I will allow her, unless she chuses a lover more to my mind. I have disinherited my son already for going into the army.

B

L U C Y.

## L U C Y.

He was in the right of it, I'm sure its a much fitter employment for a man to be measuring swords with a Frenchman in the field, than silk and laces to the ladies in a shop. What between men milliners, and men mantua makers, there won't be an occupation left for a woman shortly.

## D I A P E R.

They may thank themselves for it; The women encroach so much upon the province of the men now-a-days, that we are obliged to retaliate in our own defence.

## H A R R I E T.

Dear papa, I can't think what it is makes you have such an aversion to the army?

## D I A P E R.

No, that I dare swear; for the whole sex, from the duchess to the milk-maid, are as naturally attracted to scarlet as moths to a candle, and generally as much to their cost.

## H A R R I E T.

Dear Sir, what mechanical old fashioned notions you have; they woudn't be receiv'd now in any circle which has the least pretence to taste.

## D I A P E R.

Taste! it was never good time for the city since they knew what taste was. Formerly a citizen had no taste but getting money; and his wife and daughters none but saving it. But now, if they are at all to be distinguished from the other end of the town, 'tis only by their excess in every fashionable folly, and the affectation of pretending to characters they don't know how to support.

## H A R R I E T.

In that Sir, we only follow the example the men set us; or you would not have so many orators in your clubs affecting eloquence, without knowing their alphabet, and politicians deciding upon the interests of Europe, with no more

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more knowledge of it than they glean from a newspaper.

L U C Y.

Ay ma'am, they had better become members of the city association, and learn to assist in their country's defence than rail at those who do.

D I A P E R.

No, no, we've done with associations now, Heav'n be prais'd ! If the war had continued much longer the nation would have been nothing else but soldiers ; they swarm already like locusts, and like locusts devour all before them — but I shall stand prating here till I shall be too late for the club [*looking at his watch*] so get into your chamber mistres, and let me hear no more on this head ; for swarm as they will, they shall none of them share the produce of my industry, that I'm determined.

[Exit.]

S C E N E II.

*Harriet and Lucy.*

L U C Y.

And my mistress is determined never to share it with any of the drones you are so fond of, who do nothing but buzz about the hive, interrupt the working bees ; and eat up the honey for which they labour — I wish he was out of the house ma'am, for it's almost the time in which the Captain appointed you to meet him.

H A R R I E T.

Heigh ho ! as the hour approaches, I feel my resolution fail me.

L U C Y.

Lord, ma'am, what a bugbear do you make of an adventure which half the sex are languishing to be engaged in. Why an elopement at present is as necessary to establish the reputation of a woman for spirit, as a duel the credit of a man for courage.

B 2

H A R -

H A R R I E T.

It's no wonder the men are so averse to marriage, when the women are so enterprizing.

L U C Y.

These obsolete notions are all owing to your home education ; had you been bred like other young ladies at a boarding-school, you would soon have got the better of these prejudices. I liv'd at one myself once, and there was not one of our young ladies in her teens who would have made so much scruple of jumping out of her window into the arms of a man she never saw before, as you do of trusting yourself with one of whose sincerity you have been long assur'd.

H A R R I E T.

Hark ! the street door opens, see whether it is my father.

L U C Y. (*Looking.*)

Yes, ma'am, 'tis the old gentleman, he's gone at last — come, let us take the opportunity ; your hat and cloak are in the next room.

H A R R I E T.

Now the moment I so much wish'd for is come, I'm so terrify'd I dare not venture. You shall go Lucy and tell Fairlove —

L U C Y.

Indeed ma'am I won't be so much your enemy ; suppose the Captain, piqu'd at your want of confidence in him, should be offended and quit you.

H A R R I E T.

That thought determines me — yet I feel a strange reluctance.

L U C Y.

If you was married, and it was your husband you was going to, your reluctance would not be to be wondered at, as times go — but I believe there are few besides yourself who wou'd feel any reluctance to fly into the arms of a favoured lover.

[Exeunt.

S C E N E

## S C E N E III. (changes to a Street)

*Enter Sprightly.*

Heaven's blessing be upon the man who first invented turnpike roads, and post chaises ! I'm sure we young collegians are infinitely obliged to him. Formerly a student at the university was as safely immur'd as if he was in a prison. But now they have made only a few hours ride of it to town, we may come up snug without being miss'd, and bid our tutors defiance. This morning was I safe in my cell at college, and here am I now in this centre of delights and enjoyments, disposed to partake of every amusement it affords. As Ranger says, "I've wine in "my head, and money in my pocket, so am prepar'd for "an adventure." — And see, as I wish'd, yonder comes a tight little vessel, that looks as if she was on a cruize — I'm resolv'd to see if I can't make a prize of her.

[Exit. *Alarm.*]

## S C E N E IV.

*Enter Lucy hastily.*

Watch ! watch ! Heaven's how unlucky it is that my mistress should be set upon by this half drunk boisterous fellow — watch, I say.

*Enter Watchman.*

What's the matter, mistress ?

L U C Y .

Oh, watchman, yonder's a lady assaulted by a man in the street.

W A T C H .

Assaulted ! where ?

L U C Y .

Yonder, yonder, make haste, or she'll be run away with before you arrive.

*Exit.*

## W A T C H.

No, no, never fear young woman; men are not such fools here to run away with a woman against her will, when there are so many ready to be run away with by their own consent.

[Exit.]

## S C E N E V.

*Re-enter Sprightly following Fairlove, who seems chagrined.*

## S P R I G H T L Y.

Prithee, Frank, why in such dudgeon? Sure the fortres I was attacking had not capitulated to you, had it?

## F A I R L O V E.

Yes, Sir, the lady you have affronted, I have been this half year persuading to go off to Scotland with me, and when I had, with great difficulty, gain'd her consent, you have contriv'd to blast all my hopes.

## S P R I G H T L Y.

What, do you know so little of the sex as to imagine that when a girl has once got an elopement into her head disappointment will damp her spirit? No, like oil pour'd on fire, 'twill but make it burn the brighter.

## F A I R L O V E.

I'm afraid not; and that's not my only fear, for, during the confusion, she flipp'd away before I arriv'd, and I know not what is become of her.

## S P R I G H T L Y.

'Tis a confounded unlucky affair—but how the devil shou'd I know she was your mistress.

## F A I R L O V E.

That's true, but cou'd you not see the difference between a modest woman, and a woman of the town?

## S P R I G H T L Y.

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### S P R I G H T L Y.

No faith—if modest women will walk at night without a man to protect them, they ought not to be angry if they are taken for what they are not.

### F A I R L O V E.

That's owing to your ignorance; a hawk who is trained at what game to fly, never mistakes his quarry; while an untam'd one pounces at every thing which comes in his way—zounds! I thought the university trammels wou'd have tam'd you.

### S P R I G H T L Y.

What, you are like the rest of the world I see, who fancy that every college student must be a pedant, wear a wig, and look as if he was cut out of pasteboard. No, no, a hundred years ago, such an exotic might be here and there found, but at present, thanks to the public schools, and the vicinity of London, it must be plausibly our own faults if we don't know as much of the world as if the University were in Grosvenor-square.

### F A I R L O V E.

You seem determined it shan't be your fault, however.

### S P R I G H T L Y.

And yet, notwithstanding that sneer, I have been at hard study for several weeks, till I was tir'd of Greek and Algebra, one o'clock dinners, and the tinkling of chapel-bells; so determined to change the scene for a few days only. However, as I think I ought to make you all the reparation in my power for my mistake to night, I will stay longer in town, if my assistance will be of any service to you, tho' at the hazard of being expell'd when I go back.

### F A I R L O V E.

I hope I shan't be forc'd to put your friendship to so severe a test. I have sent my servant to see whether Harriet is return'd home, if she is safe, I shall soon know what she intends to do; shou'd I have occasion for you, where shall I find you?

S P R I G H T L Y.

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S P R I G H T L Y.

At my uncle Morecraft's.

F A I R L O V E.

What, the old rogue of a trading justice — is he in the commission yet?

S P R I G H T L Y.

Yes, notwithstanding the example and exertions of the worthy part of his brethren, he still contrives to continue his usual practice.

F A I R L O V E.

I am sorry for the respectable part of the bench, most of whom are an honour to their office, that such a disgrace to magistracy should be suffered to remain among them.

S P R I G H T L Y.

I can't defend him faith, tho' he is my uncle; but however there I am at present, and there, after I have pass'd an hour with a few honest fellows, if you want me you will find me.

[*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E VI.

*A Chamber in Morecraft's House.*

Morecraft is discover'd sitting at a Table, Books, Papers, &c. Capias attending.

M O R E C R A F T.

Let me see, what with ordinary and extraordinary fees of office, and hush money for connivance, this last has been a pretty profitable season.

C A P I A S.

Yes, your worship, of all the trades ever invented, commend me to the trade of justice for profit.

MORECRAFT.

## M O R E C R A F T.

Right, Capias, a Rotation-office, to the few who know how to manage it, is as sure a card as a Lottery-office; for though the adventurers in each get little but blanks, the keepers may be certain of a prize. Besides, in a free country like this, the laws ought to be open to every body, and therefore he's the best justice who gives people the most opportunities of going to law.

## C A P I A S.

Your worship reasons acutely to be sure, but I'm afraid you'll find it difficult to persuade the world that putting justice up to auction, is the way to make it either useful or respectable.

## M O R E C R A F T.

And why not, is not every thing venal now a days? And if every thing goes by purchase, what can people purchase better than justice?—Besides, justice is my profession, every man should live by his profession, and I'm determined to live by justice.

## C A P I A S.

Yes, but you are determined justice shan't live by you. [Aside.]

## S C E N E VII.

*Enter C R A B.*

So, Crab, what news do you bring, who have you visited to night?

## C R A B.

First, your worship, we visited the various houses of civil recreation, there are several new ones set up in our district; but they are all ready to pay your worship the usual fee for connivance, so we did not disturb them.

## M O R E C R A F T.

## M O R E C R A F T.

You did right—I am collector of the customs of justice, and nobody within my jurisdiction shall deal in any goods but what have paid duty.

## C R A B.

Next, your worship, we visited the E O tables, but the fellow who keeps the great house in the next street laugh'd at us, and told us he was protected by those of such high rank, that your worship durst not molest him.

## M O R E C R A F T.

The dog's right there; for the laws trample on the poor, and the rich trample on the laws.

## C R A B.

So it seems, for we just peep'd in and saw lords and lacquies, peers and pickpockets jumbled together, as if they had been old acquaintance.

## M O R E C R A F T.

Aye, Crab, gaming, like death, levels all distinctions; nay, gaming can do more than death, and in a moment turn a lord into a sharper, and a sharper into a lord.

## C R A B.

But though we durst not meddle with them, your worship, we have taken up a man for assaulting a woman in the street.

## M O R E C R A F T.

An assault did you say, this may prove a profitable business if the fellow has got any money—do you know who he is?

## C R A B.

No, he says he's a stranger.

## M O R E C R A F T.

So much the better—the less he knows of our laws the more we shall be able to make of him—what is the woman?

## C R A B.

## T C A R I A E B T O M

A girl of the town I believe; for not willing I suppose to lose her gallant, she refused to accuse him, but said it was another. However we took them both into custody, and they are now below in the hall.

## M O R E C R A F T .

Go with the constable, Capias, and bring them before us.

[Exit Crab and Capias.]

## S C E N E V H I .

Enter Mrs. M O R E C R A F T .

- Am I never to have my house at liberty, Mr. Morecraft, must it be filled morning, noon, and night, with your runners and retainers?

## M O R E C R A F T .

Nay, Mrs. Morecraft, I'm sure you ought not to complain when you enjoy the convenience of it. With outit, how do you think I shou'd be able to support your extravagance?

## Mrs. M O R E C R A F T .

I don't know what you mean by extravagance, Mr. Morecraft! I enter into no expence but what becomes me; and if I keep the best company, it is for your honour.

## M O R E C R A F T .

May be so—but honour's too expensive an article for me to deal in. I have contriv'd to live pretty well hitherto without it, and I shan't begin now to purchase such a costly superfluity.

## Mrs. M O R E C R O F T .

These vulgar mechanical ideas are a disgrace to your station; but if you don't know what becomes the dignity of your office, I do.

## M O R E C R A F T.

Don't tell me of dignity; money is the only thing which gives dignity now-a-days. Who takes most care of my dignity, therefore, I who get money, or you who squander it? — But the world is turn'd upside down, and every body is got out of place.

## MRS. M O R E C R A F T.

Yes, or you would never have been made a Justice. Sure I was infatuated to unite myself to such a fellow; when I might have been so much better match'd — you know I might,

## M O R E C R A F T.

I ought to know it, I'm sure; for I generally hear of it a dozen times a day.

## MRS. M O R E C R A F T.

Besides Timmy Tiffany, the beau mercer, and Sir Gregory Gander, knight and alderman, was'nt there Issachar, the great Jew broker, dying at my feet?

## M O R E C R A F T.

He was in more danger of dying elsewhere, for if he hadn't run away, he would have been hang'd for swindling.

## MRS. M O R E C R A F T.

But you have no sense of the sacrifice I made you, and the treasure you obtain'd.

## M O R E C R A F T.

That's only in character, dear justice, you know, should have no partiality.

## S C E N E IX.

*Enter Grab, with Harriet and Hastings.*

## C R A B.

Here are the parties, your worship — this is the man we took up for assaulting this woman.

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M O R E C R A F T. (*Aside.*)

She's a charming creature upon my word — Well young woman, what have you to say against this man?

H A R R I E T.

Nothing. — Heavens! what a situation am I in!

M O R E C R A F T.

Nothing — recollect yourself — I see you are abash'd, but don't be afraid; if he has affronted you, I'll take care he shan't offend you again in a hurry.

H A S T I N G S.

I fancy old gentleman, the lady is pretty well convinced from my conduct to night, that such care is needless; so far from offending her, I protected her when she was in distress, and would do the same again upon the same occasion.

Mrs. M O R E C R A F T. (*Aside.*)

He is a brave fellow, and as generous as brave.

M O R E C R A F T.

Aye, friend, so you say; but I know my office better than to trust culprits on their own testimony — Who are you, from whence do you come?

H A S T I N G S.

From the West Indies.

M O R E C R A F T.

I thought so — What I suppose you imagined you was among your slaves? but we'll teach you another lesson. This is not a land of tyranny.

H A S T I N G S.

Yes, the worst of tyranny, for open oppression may be guarded against; but while designing knaves in power under colour of justice, can commit greater enormities than any their office was intended to correct, England has no great reason to boast of her police.

M O R E

## M O R E C R A F T.

Bear witness how I'm insulted in the execution of my office ; his own words are sufficient. Make out his mittimus, Capias, I'll commit him for contempt.

## MRS. M O R E C R A F T.

That must not be. He is a fine spirited fellow, and it's a pity he should suffer such a disgrace. (*Afise*) My dear, don't you see what kind of man this is, and the danger you run in committing him upon such slight evidence.

## M O R E C R A F T.

I believe you are right lovee, I believe you are right. Suppose you talk to him, and try to persuade him to a compromise — perhaps your eloquence may have more effect than mine.

## MRS. M O R E C R A F T.

With all my heart — Come, Sir, your speaking so roughly to the justice provok'd him ; but I have pleaded for you, and he has commission'd me to talk to you — so Sir, follow me if you please, I have something particular to communicate to you.

## H A S T I N G S.

Certainly, Ma'am — What can the old Jezabel want with me ?

[*Afise*.]

[*Exeunt Mrs. Morecraft and Hastings.*

## M O R E C R A F T.

This is a lucky circumstance ; now I shall have an opportunity of speaking to the girl in private — Crab, do you go and wait below, while I examine the young woman ; for I find she is so bashful she will confess nothing before witnessess.

*Exit Crab.*

## S C E N E

S C E N E X.

Morecraft, Harriet.

(aside) A T H A R R I E T

H A R R I E T. (*Aside.*)

Heavens ! what will become of me !

M O R E C R A F T.

Well, my little Venus, tho' you would not speak out before company, I hope you will get the better of your apprehensions now we are alone ; perhaps you are afraid of owning the truth for fear of losing your lover, but don't mind that, if you will follow my advice, I'll find you a better lover in the room of him you lose, and your interest shall not suffer by the exchange.

H A R R I E T. (*Aside.*)

What can he mean ? Sure he don't suspect the truth in regard to Fairlove ! — Sir, I don't understand you.

M O R E C R A F T.

Nay, my dear, this must be affectation, for tho' by your manner I believe you have not been long in your profession, you can't be such a novice.

H A R R I E T.

Pardon me, Sir, this is language I have not been used to, and it can only arise from your ignorance, that I have friends, who, if they knew of this treatment, would make you repent your mistake.

M O R E C R A F T.

Yes, I see we are both mistaken — I took you for a novice in your trade, but I find you understand all the cant of it. (*Aside.*) Come, I'm sure I offer fair, aye, and you'll find it both for your interest and reputation to listen to my proposal, for I'll settle more upon you than half the young spendthrifts about town are worth.

H A R -

H A R R I E T.

Here's an old villain ! — I must try if I cannot deceive him, and get from him that way. (*aside*) Well upon one condition I may perhaps be prevail'd on to put myself under your protection.

M O R E C R A F T. (*Eagerly*.)

Well, what is it, my charmer ?

H A R R I E T.

Why, that you will let somebody carry a note for me to a friend I was going to, when I was stopped in the street, and who will be terribly alarmed at not seeing or hearing from me.

M O R E C R A F T.

With all my heart — in that room you will find materials for writing.

H A R R I E T. (*A side*.)

Now, Mr. Justice, I hope I shall be even with you.

*Exit.*

M O R E C R A F T.

This note is certainly a pretence to get from me, I see through it clearly ; but I shall be too many for the little hypocrite, for I'll only pretend to send it, and then she'll be obliged to accept of my protection. But while she is writing I'll go and see what my wife has done with the gentleman. I dare say by this time she has brought him to compliance — for if he can resist her eloquence, he has more courage than I have.

*[Exit.]*

## S C E N E XI.

*Changes to Mrs. Morecraft's dressing-room.*

*Hastings and Mrs. Morecraft.*

MRS. M O R E C R A F T.

I was convinced, from your manners and appearance, you could not be guilty of the offence you are charged with,

with, and I own myself so interested in your behalf, that, if I thought you would be sensible of the obligation, I would endeavour to set you free without the knowledge of the Justice.

## H A S T I N G S.

Sensible ! Not Romeo to his Juliet was so true, as I will prove to gratitude and you. — I hope she'll be content with this, for my fancy is exhausted and can furnish no more amorous nonsense. [Aside,

## MRS. M O R E C R A F T.

Come with me then, and I'll let you out privately — hark ! sure I hear my husband's voice ! — Ah ! 'tis him, and coming hither, as I live — there is no getting you off now.

## H A S T I N G S.

Can't I escape by this door ?

## MRS. M O R E C R A F T.

No ; that way the constable will discover you, and by ill luck there is no closet in this room — get under my toilette for a moment, and leave me to manage the Justice. I'll tell him I have set you free. [After some hesitation Hastings gets under the toilette,

## S C E N E XII.

Enter M O R E C R A F T (in surprize).

How this ? Where's the culprit, Mrs. Morecraft ? What have you done with him ?

## MRS. M O R E C R A F T.

Dismiss'd him.

## M O R E C R A F T.

What, you brought him to contribution, did you ! Aye, I knew you would, and I'm glad of it, for I have been able to make nothing of the girl.

MRS. MORECRAFT.

And what have you done with her?

MORECRAFT.

I have dismiss'd her too; you know I could not legally detain her.

### S C E N E XIV.

Enter Harriet flying from Sprightly, who pursues her, and throughout the scene is supposed to be flushed with liquor.

S P R I G H T L Y.

Whither so fast my little nimble footed Daphne? wherever you fly I'll follow you like Apollo of old. Oh the devil my aunt, and uncle! [Aside.]

MORECRAFT.

How now? What's the matter — Zounds here's a discovery. [Aside.]

MRS. MORECRAFT.

It's plain enough Mr. Justice what's the matter? Is this the way you discharg'd the woman? A new mode of discharging indeed, to shut her up, in order to reserve her for yourself.

MORECRAFT.

Don't be so hasty lovee, it's all a mistake. I did dismiss her, but, as it was so late that she was afraid to go home alone, she begg'd I would let her write to her friends to come and fetch her, and she was about it when this spark here, I suppose, came home, and disturb'd her.

S P R I G H T L Y. (Aside.)

Yes, I seem to have come a little mal-apropos indeed

MRS. MORECRAFT

It was fortunate he did come, or I might never have known your rogueries — A pretty story you have invented too —

too — no, no, she is too well us'd to late hours, I dare swear, to be afraid of going home at any time.

H A R R I E T.

However appearances may be against me, madam, the justice has told you the truth ; I was writing to my friends to come and take me home, when this man, to whose rudeness I owe all the misfortunes which have befallen me to night, broke in upon me and obliged me to fly from him a second time, for it was him who affronted me in the street.

S P R I G H T L Y. (*Afside.*)

Fairlove's mistress again as I live !

M O R E C R A F T.

So, sir, its to you we are obliged for all this confusion, is it? How dare you affront a woman either in the street, or my house, and aggravate the offence too by being drunk?

S P R I G H T L Y.

No, uncle, there you mistake ; drunkenness is the only thing which can excuse it. Every man acts according to what he is, not according to what he is not ; a drunken man therefore cannot be expected to act like a sober one — 'There's logic for you ; — you see I hav'n't been to the university for nothing.

M O R E C R A F T.

No, you have learn'd some pretty lessons there truly.

S P R I G H T L Y.

Yes, and you find we join practice to theory.

M O R E C R A F T.

Get out of the room.

S P R I G H T L Y.

I thought you had been wiser at your years, uncle, than after having bought one house to want to rent a second, when you can't furnish the first.

M O R E C R A F T (*lifting his cane.*)

Is this your penitence, you young spendthrift, for the offence you have been guilty of, to insult me to my face? Get out of the room, I say.

S P R I G H T L Y.

Well I'm going — don't be angry — passion don't become an old man.

[He staggers backwards, overturns the toilette, and discovers Hastings—Mrs. Morecraft shrieks out; after a pause, in which they stand looking at one another, he goes on.]

What the devil are you playing at hide and seek in every room in the house? A very pleasant comedy this, we are performing here; and full of surprising incidents.

M O R E C R A F T,

Yes, very surprizing incidents.

S P R I G H T L Y.

Have you any more discoveries to make, good folks? Because if they are like this, they must be very diverting.

Mrs. M O R E C R A F T.

Yes very diverting to be sure — come, Mr. Morecraft, don't be surprized, I had discharg'd the gentleman; but as he was going he heard you upon the stair case, and for fear you should not consent, he begg'd me to let him conceal himself till you was gone.

M O R E C R A F T. (*A side.*)

I know how much of this is truth, by its being so exact a counterpart to my own story.

Mrs. M O R E C R A F T.

And then he would have escap'd — if this drunken blundering blockhead had not prevented him.

S P R I G H T L Y.

I have been the marplot of the piece indeed; for fear therefore I should make any more discoveries, I'll take myself away, and leave you to settle matters by yourselves

selves — I shall make bold to watch tho' and see what becomes of the girl, that I may inform Fairlove. [ *Afiae.*

Aunt, it was fortunate I came home, or you would never have known the Justice's rogueries — Uncle, my aunt seems to understand the new mode of dismission as well as yourself. [ *Exit.*

M O R E C R A F T.

We'll soon see that ————— Here Crab.

*Enter Crab.*

Take charge of your prisoner, and keep him safe at your house till the morning, when, unless he compounds handsomely, he shall go to jail.

Mrs. M O R E C R A F T.

And, constable, take charge of the woman ; since defiance is the word, defiance let it be. I'll make good my accusation against her.

H A S T I N G S.

Don't be dejected, madam ; the truth of this affair cannot be long conceal'd. To-morrow our innocence will appear to the disgrace of this iniquitous old vender of justice.

[ *Exeunt Harriet and Hastings with the constable.*

Mrs. M O R E C R A F T.

Yes, or my wits shall fail me ; since one of us must be expos'd we'll see whose word will be most trusted, and it shall go hard, but I'll turn the tables upon you yet

[ *Exit.*

M O R E C R A F T.

And it shall go hard, but I'll turn the tables upon you all — It will be a master stroke, if I can secure the girl, get rid of my wife, and make her gallant pay the expence of both. [ *Exit.*

A C T E N D S.

## A C T II.—S C E N E I.

*A Room in the Constable's House.**Harriet is discover'd, reading a Letter.*

**W**HAT a train of inconveniences does one false step draw after it! Notwithstanding the anxiety my rash step this evening has already occasioned me, I am afraid, from this letter, which the Justice has had the assurance to write to me, I shall find my situation still more distressing, unless the note I have written home should bring my father here before him. At all events my hopes of being united to Fairlove are now entirely overthrown.

## S O N G.

Oh love, how swift thy fairest prospects fade !  
 Swift as the beauty of a vernal day ;  
 At morn the sun illumines the dew-splrent glade,  
 And flow'r's expanding drink his orient ray.

## II.

But soon it passes, chilling blasts arise,  
 The flowrets droop, his lustre disappears,  
 And the light clouds, that glow'd with golden dye,  
 Chang'd to black vapours, mourn its fate with tears.

## S C E N E II.

*Enter Crab.*

Well, miss, I have dispatched your note as you directed, and there are two gentlemen without, enquiring for you.

H A R-

H A R R I E T.

Two did you say?

C R A B .

Yes, two.

H A R R I E T.

Then it can't be the Justice, (*aside*) — Did'nt one of them say his name was Diaper?

C R A B .

No, Fairlove; he's an officer.

H A R R I E T.

Oh, shew him in; his coming is fortunate indeed.

C R A B (*Aside.*)

This is some old lover I dare swear, by the joy she shews at his arrival. [Exit,

## S C E N E III.

*Re-enter Crab, with Fairlove, and Sprightly.*

F A I R L O V E .

My dearest Harriet, have I found you at last? What anxious moments have I passed since the accident which separated us this evening; and yet I know not whether my joy or surprize were greatest, when this gentleman inform'd me where you were.

H A R R I E T .

That gentleman is indeed the properest person to inform you; for he has been the principal cause of my being in such a place.

S P R I G H T L Y . (*Aside.*)

A pretty awkward figure I make here.

F A I R -

## F A I R L O V E.

I know it, but as the offence was unintentional, and he has made all the reparation in his power, I hope you will forgive him, as I do.

## S P R I G H T L Y.

"Tis in that hope only madam I have ventur'd to appear before you, and I shall not be perfectly easy till I have made my apology to the gentleman who protected you,

## F A I R L O V E.

Where is that gentleman, Harriet? I understood from Sprightly, that he was carried to the constable's as well as yourself.

## C R A B.

Yes, Captain, the gentleman is safe in my house; and if your honour desires to speak to him, I'll bring him to you.

## F A I R L O V E.

I do desire it.—Go, with my respects, and beg the favor of his company.

[Exit. Constable.]

## H A R R I E T.

His conduct indeed deserves both our acknowledgments. But had not you arriv'd, I am afraid his protection would not have availed me any longer, as you will see by that letter.

## F A I R L O V E.

What's this? from the Justice. (Reads.)

" My sweet Rosebud, I am extremely concerned at the accident which happened at my house, I was obliged to submit to your present confinement to avoid giving suspicion. However don't be alarmed, the constable is under my command, and as soon as I can get rid of my wife, I will myself release you from your present bondage, and procure you a more agreeable one in the arms of

Your longing admirer."

Longing

Longing admirer! I'll cure his longing for him I warrant: a doating old rascal, not content with confining you, to dare insult you with offers of love — I'll pistol the villain.

## S P R I G H T L Y.

Softly, Captain; softly and fairly; conduct is as essential in an officer as courage. The enemy's works are so strong here that its not only impossible to force them, but you'll have a mine sprung under your feet every step you take — But here comes the gentleman.

## S C E N E IV.

*Enter Hastings.*

## F A I R L O V E.

Hastings! is it possible? — What can have brought you from the West Indies, where, when I was last with our regiment, you had married, and seem'd to be settled for life.

## H A S T I N G S.

Aye, so I thought; but my wife dying, I grew weary of the place, and therefore resolved to come over and see if I can't make my peace with my father, who you know disinherited me some time ago, for going into the army. I landed but this morning, and was on the enquiry, when this lady —

## F A I R L O V E.

And is it to you I have been obliged for the protection of my Harriet? This is singularly fortunate.

## S P R I G H T L Y (A side.)

Yes, faith its singular enough, that one friend of yours should attack your mistress, and another defend her, without either of them knowing who she was.

E H A S T I N G S.

## H A S T I N G S.

Is the lady engaged to you? — Then the service I have rendered her is doubly agreeable to me, and I now look upon the accident which has brought us together, as a happy one; though in such a place.

## S P R I G H T L Y.

Then, Sir, I hope you will forgive me my share in bringing you here; the discovery I made was a little mal-apropos to be sure; but I am mistaken in my aunt, if, after taking a fancy to you, she is rebuffed by such an accident.

## H A S T I N G S.

No — if she were, your discovery would have been still more fortunate. But I have just received a letter from her, that she will visit me here, as soon as she can get rid of her husband.

## F A I R L O V E.

Yes, and the best of it is, they are endeavouring to out-wit one another; for Harriet has received a letter of exactly the same purport from the Justice.

## S P R I G H T L Y.

Egad, I have a thought just come into my head, which I think will not only expose them both, but make them glad to sign a treaty with us on our own terms, if the lady will but bear her part.

## F A I R L O V E.

Well, what is it? We'll all join, Harriet and all.

## S P R I G H T L Y.

Come along then, and assist me to secure the constable in our interest, for without him I can do nothing.

[*Exeunt.*]

## S C E N E V.

*Changes to another Room.*

Enter M O R E C R A F T.

Matters go on swimmingly. If my wife should make a visit to her gallant, the constable has promised to swear

any

any thing in my favour, and now if I can persuade my little Rose-bud into compliance, my happiness will be compleat. I wonder what makes her so long — Oh ! here she is.

Enter *Harriet.*

M O R E C R A F T.

My sweet little Jeffamine, I am glad you are come, I began to be afraid you was offended with me for the accident which happened at my house. Come let me conduct you to some more agreeable situation.

H A R R I E T.

No, Mr. Justice, though your conscience is so callous as not to reproach you with such infidelity to your wife, mine is too tender to dispense with vows —

M O R E C R A F T.

Why, you are not married too, are you ? But that need be no impediment, for he would be thought as great a fool at present, who preferred his love to his interest as his honesty,

H A R R I E T.

Hark ! sure I hear somebody coming.

M O R E C R A F T.

No, no — Ha ! yes, faith here's another couple, and seemingly upon the same errand with ourselves. Confound the constable, I say, for not keeping better watch ; if I should be discovered here in this situation, my character will be ruined.

H A R R I E T.

Here's a closet, step into it, and I'll watch in the mean time, and inform you as soon as they are gone.

M O R E C R A F T.

Hadn't you better go in with me ?

H A R R I E T.

No, no, then there will be nobody to release you.

## M O R E C R A F T.

I profess I don't like this being closetted at all; I hope they won't be long.

## H A R R I E T.

No, never fear — in quickly, or you will be too late.  
 [He goes into the closet] Now Mr. Justice, I think we shall be even with you. [Exit,

## S C E N E VI.

*Enter Hastings and Mrs. Morecraft.*

## MRS. M O R E C R A F T.

I am afraid you will think I am too bold to visit you at this time of night, but as I was disappointed in procuring your liberty, I thought, in pity, I ought to comfort you in your confinement; and as the Constable is in the Justice's interest, I was obliged to come privately, and alone, for the sake of my character, lest he should discover me.

H A S T I N G S. (*Afide.*)

This is the first time I ever heard that the way for a woman to take care of her character, was to trust herself alone with a man at midnight.

## MRS. M O R E C R A T F.

But if I had not been thoroughly persuaded of your modesty, I should not have ventured, I assure you.

H A S T I N G S. (*Afide.*)

Egad, I fancy modesty is one of the last qualities you wish in the man with whom you trust yourself alone. — You make me happy, Madam, to find your sentiments so congenial to my own; for people in our situation —

## MRS. M O R E C R A F T.

What are you married then? I am glad of it, now we may indulge our mutual innocent esteem, and set the world an example; for infidelity in wedlock is so common now-

now, that husbands and wives seem mutually to agree to over-look it.

H A S T I N G S. (*Afside*)

A pretty catechism this old Jezabel would teach a man.

M R S . M O R E C R A F T.

List ! didn't I hear a voice ? I'm sure I did — I hope we are not overheard, I would not be discovered for the world.

H A S T I N G S.

No, and for fear we should, I'll remove the light, and lock that door. — But it shall be on the outside, that you and your dearee may have no hopes of escaping, when you discover each other. [ *Afside* ]

[ *Exit with the candle, the stage dark.* ]

M R S . M O R E C R A F T.

I hardly know what to make of this young fellow, I must try him farther, for I'm determined not to lose him if I can help it.

M O R E C R A F T. (*Coming out of the closet.*)

All's silent, I fancy they are gone, I'm glad on't, for I was almost stifled in that confounded closet. I wish my little honey-fuckle would return.

M R S . M O R E C R A F T.

That's his voice — hist — hist — Sir !

M O R E C R A F T.

Where are you, my charmer ?

M R S . M O R E C R A F T.

Here — speak low, for fear we should be overheard. Wont you have a bad opinion of me, for trusting myself thus in the dark with you ? tell me truly.

M O R E C R A F T.

A bad opinion — no, it does but increase my esteem for you, as it shews what a good opinion you have of me ; and here I kneel and swear.

S C E N E

## S C E N E VII.

*Enter Sprightly, Fairlove, Hastings, Harriet, and Crab, with lights.*

O M N E S .

Ha ! Ha ! Ha !

S P R I G H T L Y .

How's this ? My uncle upon his knees to my aunt in the dark ! I'm glad to see you're grown so fond of each other, it's the first time I ever remember to have witnessed it.

M O R E C R A F T . *(Aside.)*

Blown up, by Jupiter ! My wife !

MRS. M O R E C R A F T . *(Aside.)*

I see I'm betray'd, but I'm determined to brave it.

S P R I G H T L Y .

What, are you coy before company ? Methinks you don't seem so enamoured of each other, as you were.

F A I R L O V E .

Let them settle that point at their leisure. At present I have an account to adjust with him, in which I fancy all his chicanery will not avail him. This lady, Sir, whom you have dar'd to detain, and attempt to seduce, is my intended wife.

H A R R I E T .

And if that is not sufficient to convict you, here is the letter you had the assurance to write to me.

MRS. M O R E C R A F T .

Give me that letter, Ma'am, 'twill be an instrument to further my revenge ?

H A S T I N G S .

Nay, if that's the case, I ought in conscience to give this to the Justice, that you may be upon equal terms.

M O R E -

## MORECRAFT.

I see how it is, lovee, we have been both outwitted, and therefore as we are in each other's power, we had better forget and forgive.

## HASTINGS.

Oh, Mrs. Morecraft won't be angry about such a trifle, for infidelity in wedlock is so common now, that husbands and wives mutually agree to overlook it.

## HARRIET to the JUSTICE.

Yes, he would be thought as great a fool at present, who prefer'd his love to his interest, as his honesty.

DIAPER. (*Without*)

Where is she, I insist on seeing her instantly?

## HARRIET.

Hark! sure that's my father's voice now without heaven's! how shall I be able to look him in the face.

## SCENE THE LAST.

## Enter DIAPER

Oh, here she is, and attended by her red coat I see. Your servant, ma'am, a pretty night's adventure you have made of it, what now I suppose, like a true heroine of romance, you have a spirit prepared to defend the disobedience it has taught you to commit?

## HARRIET.

I hope, Sir, you will allow that the letter I wrote to you is a proof my professions are sincere.

## DIAPER.

Yes, as those of a courtier, who makes a merit of resigning a place he knows its out of his power to keep. Hufsey, do you think your father is such a fool as not to see through the pretence of making a merit of what you could not help?

## HASTINGS.

H A S T I N G S. (*A side*)

Sure I shou'd know that voice, and those features.

F A I R L O V E.

Don't be so severe with your daughter, Sir, if she has committed any offence, I only am to blame; for it was not without great reluctance, and after long solicitation on my part, that she took the step which has brought her into her present situation.

D I A P E R.

No doubt you found much solicitation necessary to make a girl's inclinations get the better of her duty—Lord! Lord! if our soldiers were but as victorious over our foes, as over our women, what heroes they would be.

H A S T I N G S.

It must be so, I cannot be deceiv'd. (*A side*)—pray, Sir, had you not a son whom you disinherited for going into the army?

D I A P E R. (*Not looking at him*)

Yes, he was as infatuated as his sister; all my family are caught with red cloth, like so many mackarel.

H A S T I N G S.

And what is become of him, can you tell?

D I A P E R. (*Seeing him*)

Ha—tell—egad I don't know whether I can or no; for if it was not for your dress, and that I have reason besides to think he is in the West-Indies, I shou'd swear you were him.

H A S T I N G S.

That you may safely do, Sir, without being forsworn.

D I A P E R.

If so, where's the badge of your disobedience, firrah; where's your cockade?

H A S T I N G S.

## H A S T I N G S.

I have no right to it, Sir; a rich planter's widow, with fifty thousand pounds, took a fancy to me, and offered to marry me, if I would quit the army, and change my name for her's.

## D I A P E R.

And had you sense enough to do two such good things at once, as to get rid of the army, and get possession of fifty thousand pounds, then I see there are some hopes of you, and you shan't want my forgiveness.

## H A S T I N G S.

Complete it then, Sir, by forgiving my sister too, and consenting to her union with my friend here, you cannot bestow her better; for if there is a man of honour upon earth, he is one.

## D I A P E R.

Of which, I suppose, his running away with my daughter is a proof. This may be modern honour, but its too refined for me.

## H A S T I N G S.

In his situation I shou'd have done the same, and so would you, too, Sir, thirty years ago—come you must relent.

## D I A P E R.

Zounds! why do you give your sister different advice from what you took yourself? If she must have him, let her persuade him to give her the same proof of his love, which you gave your planter's widow,

## F A I R L O V E.

Well, Sir, as we are now at peace, and I can lay down my commission with honour, you shall be obey'd; but though there is no discredit in quitting the garrison after the siege is over, yet he who could have deserted his post, at a time when every exertion was necessary for its defence, would have deserved to be shot for cowardice.

## H A S T I N G S .

Will not the justness of that sentiment mollify you? Come, crown your forgiveness of me by your consent, and I'll take the charge of Harriet's fortune upon myself.

## F A I R L O V E .

I am infinitely obliged to your friendship, Hastings, but money is not the motive of my addresses to your sister. Let your father but consent to our marriage, and in her possession I have all the treasure I want.

## D I A P E R . H

You are brave lads both of you, that I must say, and since you behave thus, I will not be outdone by either of you: so take my daughter, Captain, and I'll make her fortune worthy my consent.

## H A S T I N G S .

And for this iniquitous old retailer of justice — D I A P E R .

Why, as he has unwittingly been the cause of our present happiness, I am content to forgive him too, though he richly deserves to be made a public example of, upon condition he promises immediate reformation in his own conduct, by imitating the worthy example of the greater part of his brethren.

## F A I R L O V E .

And then he will be of some benefit to the community; but as there is not a more useful member of society than a good magistrate, so there is none more pernicious than a bad one; for if the fountains of public justice are contaminated, no wonder that streams of corruption overflow the land.

ROMANCE F I N I S .